

VZCZCXRO2583  
RR RUEHPA  
DE RUEHRY #0508 2391538  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
R 271538Z AUG 09  
FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3973  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 000508

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/16/2019  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EINV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [PGOV](#) [GV](#)  
SUBJECT: DADIS MAY LOSE SUPPORT FROM BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Classified By: POLOFF J. TULLY FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: EconOff met with prominent businessman, Mohammed Abliou Bah, to discuss the economic and political situation in Guinea on August 25. Bah, a public supporter of Dadis, has seemingly abandoned his former allegiance to the CNDD. He thinks that the military is becoming far too comfortable in their current position of power, stifling economic growth. END SUMMARY.

-----  
ECONOMIC DECLINE ERODES POLITICAL SUPPORT  
-----

¶2. (U) Bah, a well known businessman and proprietor of one of the largest food distribution companies in Guinea, was a strong supporter of the CNDD when they first came to power. His office is still decorated with pictures of him and the CNDD president embracing at Camp Alpha Yaya and Bah's grocery store, SuperBobo. Many locals know Bah as man who often speaks to the public in support of Dadis on behalf of the larger business community.

¶3. (C) On August 26, Bah seemed much less enthusiastic about Dadis, leadership. According to him, CNDD leadership is running the Guinean economy into the ground. Oversight in many of the government ministries has allegedly decreased significantly, allowing increased opportunities for bribery and misappropriation.

¶4. (C) "When the military took power," Bah said, "I thought that they would restore stability to our economy." He apparently thought that Dadis could reshape and strengthen the Guinean economy after 24 years of mismanagement under Conte. However, he said that instead of helping the economy find stable footing, the CNDD has made it worse. He believes that the CNDD is not educated in economic affairs and that they are "like children taking from a box of bon-bons. They think that there are endless pleasures, and they don't see an end to the bon-bon box." He told EconOff that the latest move to push back elections is an indication that the CNDD intends to keep power.

¶5. (C) Bah went on to speak of Dadis' personal intellect. According to Bah, Dadis and his inner circle have no idea how to work a computer, let alone run sophisticated economic programming. He said that their only experience is with the force and power structure under Lansana Conte and Sekou Toure, and they neither understand democracy or freedom.

¶6. (C) Bah noted that the business climate has deteriorated

substantially since the December coup. He mentioned that he has decreased his inventory of perishable goods, as he has had multiple shipments stopped at the port and spoil because of bureaucratic corruption and inefficiency since the CNDD took power. As such, he says that he is starting to rely much more heavily on the import of non-perishable food. According to Bah, the entire community of importers has had to change their inventory orders significantly since the CNDD took power.

-----  
COMMENT  
-----

17. (C) Several actors among the business community have expressed their displeasure with the current regime. Bah is an influential economic actor in Guinea and, if made public, his wavering support for the CNDD could further influence opinion among business leaders. The CNDD does not seem to have a plan for improving the economy, and the business community seems to be taking notice. Business leaders are seeing fewer growth opportunities and many of them are being harassed into providing aid and support for CNDD initiatives. If wealthy businessmen begin to change alliances, the CNDD may see themselves in a precarious position in terms of public economic support.  
BROKENSHIRE